

A History Of The

Heber Third Ward

1903-1986

Daniel McMillan was set apart as Secretary and William T. Hicken was made Treasurer. On November 24, 1903 Charles J. Wahlquist was released as First Counselor and LeRoy Cowles was set apart to fill his vacancy.

The Relief Society was organized June 11, 1903 at the Central School under the direction of Stake Relief Society officers, Annie R. Duke, Elizabeth H. Murdock and Sarah K. Duke, Stake Clerk, Joseph W. Musser and Bishop Frederick Crook. The following officers were appointed: President, Johannah E. Jensen; First Vice President, Sophia Elizabeth Hicken; Secretary, Maria C. Giles; Treasurer, Mary A. Clyde. On May 19, 1904 Marion J. Campbell was appointed Second Vice President.

The Heber Third Ward Primary was organized June 26, 1903. Sister Mary Duke, First Counselor in the Stake Board was present. Officers installed were as follows: President, Amelia Montgomery; First Counselor, Mary A. Cummings; Second Counselor, Martha Jones; Secretary, Lizzie Murray. On November 20, 1904 Mary A. Cummings and Martha Jones were released and Rhoda Ohlwiler as First Counselor and Minnie Crook as Second Counselor took their places.

The Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association came into being September 1, 1903 at a meeting in the Central School. Nellie Murray was installed as president with Minnie A. Cummings and Malinda Hicken as counselors. Josephine Moulton was secretary and Annie Jones was assistant secretary, with Lizzie McMillan, treasurer.

On Sundays Sacrament Meeting was held at 2 o'clock and a conjoint meeting of the MIA was held in the evening where talks were presented with topics that appealed to young people. Primary, the organization for children approximately from four years of age to fourteen, was conducted on Tuesday after school. The Relief Society Sisters also met on Tuesday, but at 2 o'clock. Tuesday evening was the night devoted to MIA. The three meetings were all scheduled for the same day to reduce heating costs. Relief Society, Primary and MIA meetings were discontinued during summer months so farming and harvesting chores could be accomplished.

Venola Cowley, an elementary school teacher whose father, John Ohlwiler, was custodian of the old Central School during and after the time the Third Ward used the building, recalls details about

it. "The building had eight rooms, four on an upper story and four on the lower. The Primary met in the northwest room downstairs. For Sunday services the members met upstairs in the two west rooms for the opening exercises. These rooms were separated by four big wooden doors that could be folded over and over and over to open them. There was a one foot high elevated stand at the front where those who took charge sat and conducted Sunday School and Sacrament Meetings. Sunday School was always held at 10 o'clock throughout the Stake. The townspeople were reminded every Sunday morning that it was nearly ten when Brother Robert McKnight rang the Stake House bell. They were again summoned to Sacrament Meeting by the pealing of the bell at 1:30 P.M. After opening exercises in Sunday School, the students would separate for classwork and of course, on Monday morning, the school children would complain that pencils were missing, books disturbed, desks messed up. By the way, school children and church goers sat in double desks."

JuVenta Hamblin relates that the first Sunday Schools were held for young people up to eighteen years of age. It was a real innovation when the parents' class was organized. Until then young people attended Sunday School and then stayed home and tended the children while parents went to a meeting that lasted two or more hours in the afternoon.

Venola Cowley tells us that young people were required to be fourteen years old before they could attend "Mutual." Each week at MIA one class was responsible for giving memorized scriptures. The secretary called the roll aloud. As each name was called, the person would answer "present" and then stand up and repeat a verse of scripture. Everyone in the class had to have one prepared.

In interviews for the preparation of this history several people recalled that "Uncle" Dave Hicken and Sarah Gilner consistently bore their testimonies in Fast and Testimony Meetings many years ago. "Uncle" Dave Hicken was one of the eloquent speakers of the ward and frequently told his fellow members what would happen to them in the last days. He spoke of the "Rooshans" and the four horses, a black, a white, a gray and a bay, that were going to destroy the earth. Sister Gilner, a very devout member, bore her testimony each month to the delight of the young children who enjoyed her Scandinavian brogue.